

Kia Ora Koutou,

The following is the submission of 350 Auckland to Environment Canterbury & Selwyn District Council in response to the application from Bathurst Resources Limited for an extension to their open cast coal mine operation near Coaldale.

350 Auckland oppose all of Bathurst Resources Limited consent applications due to the detrimental environmental and health impacts each would have locally, regionally and nationally.

The consents sought by Bathurst Resources Limited would allow it an 18 hectare extension of its current mine north west of Coaldale, extending the mines productivity out until 2035.

Any extension to the current mine will pose further health risks to the nearby Coaldale community and to local wildlife by extending the release of coal dust and silica pollutants into the air.¹ An expansion would also increase the risk of localised surface and groundwater contamination, causing an immediate risk to the habitat of the endangered kōwaro (Canterbury Mudfish) in the Bush Gully Stream which runs through the land.²

The environmental and health risks would also extend regionally, as approximately 90% of the coal extracted from Bathurst Resources Limited's current mine, is being burnt within the district at milk processing plants owned by dairy companies Fonterra & Synlait.³ Airborne contaminants from the burning of coal include arsenic, lead, mercury & sulfur dioxide, and are known to cause harm to human health.⁴ There are also risks associated with fly ash, a waste product from coal boilers stored in ponds or landfills, leaching toxic metals into soils and groundwater.

Nationally, any extension to the current mine would enable another 13 years of Coal extraction at a time when, as Environment Canterbury themselves have publicly stated in their 2019 Declaration of a Climate Emergency, "There is an urgent need to address climate change for the benefit of current and future generations."⁵

13 more years of Coal extraction and incineration in Canterbury and Aotearoa is not a response in proportion to the risks associated with the climate and ecological emergency we currently face. To curb our emissions and limit global warming to 1.5 degrees as we have committed to in the Paris Agreement, we need to stop extracting carbon intensive fossil fuels such as Coal. Fonterra themselves acknowledge the need to 'find alternatives to fossil fuel' and cut greenhouse gas emissions, announcing last July that they intend to stop using coal at all of their milk-product operations.⁶ A decision to allow Bathurst Resources Limited to extend its coal production in Coaldale would clearly run in opposition to the publicly stated objectives of its predominant market, the dairy industry.

350 Auckland therefore reiterates its opposition to all current resource consent applications put forward by Bathurst Resources Limited and we urge Environment Canterbury and Selwyn District Council to consider the considerable environmental and health risks associated with an expansion of this mine.

1 Hendryx, Michael; Islam, Mohammad Saidul; Dong, Guang-Hui & Paul, Gunther. (2020) Air Pollution Emissions 2008-2018 Australian Coal Mining: Implications for Public and Occupational Health, published 29 February 2020.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32121344/>

2 Hutching, Gerard (2019), Bathurst Coal buys land to expand mining for dairy factories, published 30 September 2019. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/116214332/bathurst-coal-buys-land-to-expand-mining-for-dairy-factories>

3 Kenny, Lee (2020), Canterbury Coal Mine wants to expand by 18 hectares, published 8 May 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/121454425/canterbury-coal-mine-wants-to-expand-by-18>

4 Ministry for the Environment. Air pollutant guidelines - Sulphur Dioxide.
<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/air/specific-air-pollutants/sulphur-dioxide>

5 Environment Canterbury (2019), Environment Canterbury declares climate emergency.
<https://www.ecan.govt.nz/get-involved/news-and-events/2019/environment-canterbury-declares-climate-emergency/>

6 Hutching, Gerard (2019) Fonterra pledges to stop building new coal boilers immediately, published 18 July 2019.
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/114328226/fonterra-pledges-to-stop-building-new-coal-boilers-immediately>